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The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

# **Report into certain matters relating to the proposed Murray-Darling Basin Plan**

House of Representatives  
Standing Committee on Regional Australia

July 2012  
Canberra

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## **Membership of the Committee**

**Chair** Mr Tony Windsor MP

**Deputy Chair** Mr Steve Gibbons MP

**Members** Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP  
Mr Barry Haase MP  
Ms Kirsten Livermore MP  
Mr Michael McCormack MP  
Mr Rob Mitchell MP  
Mr Dan Tehan MP

**Supplementary Members for the purposes of the Inquiry**

Hon Dr Sharman Stone MP

## **Committee Secretariat**

**Secretary** Glenn Worthington

**Inquiry Secretary** Siobhán Leyne

**Administrative Officers** Daniel Miletic

Katrina Gillogly



## **Terms of reference**

On 29 May 2012 the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities asked the Committee to inquiry into and report on:

1. progress to date in water recover towards bridging the gap by 2019 through both irrigation infrastructure investments and water purchase;
2. the potential role that new environmental works and measures projects could play in partially offsetting SDL reductions under the Basin Plan, focussing particularly on prospective project proposals identified by state governments and community interests; and
3. the groundwater sustainable diversion limits (SDLs) for Basin in the revised proposed basin Plan.





# List of recommendations

## 1 Certain matters relating to the Murray Darling Basin Plan

### Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government release a water recovery strategy well in advance of the introduction of the Basin Plan to the Parliament.

### Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government release the proposal for Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder water trading well in advance to the introduction of the Basin Plan to the Parliament.

### Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government develop a mechanism to adjust sustainable diversion limits automatically in response to efficiencies gained by environmental works and measures.

### Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government, as a matter of urgency, look seriously at further initiatives to improve river and irrigation management and monitoring.

